(ii) Brochure, CDs and other publicity material to promote Medical and health tourism has been produced by the Ministry of Tourism and has been widely circulated for publicity in target markets.

(iii) Medical and health tourism has been specifically promoted at various international platforms such as World Travel Mart, London, ITB, Berlin.

(iv) A new category of 'Medical Visa' has been introduced, which can be given for specific purpose to foreign tourist coming to India for medical treatment.

(v) Guidelines for accreditation of Ayurvedic and Panchkarma Centres have been circulated to all State Governments for implementation. The same has been placed on Ministry of Tourism's website *www.incredibleindia. org* for wider publicity.

(vi) Yoga/Ayurveda/Wellness has been promoted over the last two years in the print, electronic, internet and outdoor medium under the Ministry of Tourism's "Incredible India Campaign".

(vii) Brochures & CDs on Body, Mind and Soul covering the traditional system of medicine have been produced and circulated extensively by Ministry of Tourism.

Rural Tourism to provide employment

691. SHRI C.PERUMAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are giving priority for Rural Tourism to provide employment opportunities and Destination Development;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total financial allocation for this project and the number of areas covered under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The creation of infrastructure in Rural areas having potential for tourism is being supported under the existing scheme of Product/ Infrastructure Development for Destination and Circuit of Ministry ofTourism, while community participation and the capacity bulding including skill up

gradation in such rural areas are being supported through GOI-UNDP Endogenous Tourism Project and Capacity Building for Service Providers scheme of the Ministry. The promotion of rural tourism can lead to increased tourists arrivals to rural sites and in the process can strengthen rural livelihood including benefits to the youths, through income from visitor handling services apart from income through art and craft activities. The list of such projects taken up during 10th five year plan is annexed as Statement. [Refer to the statement appended to the answer to unstarred Question 685(a)]

Improvement of **Tourism Infrastructure**

692. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved removing ceilings on project cost for tourism infrastructure development in order to improve tourism infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of identified circuits and destinations for which this ceiling has been removed?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The guidelines of the scheme for Central financial assistance to States/ UTs for Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits have been revised. The existing upper limit of Rs. 8.00 crore has been enhanced to Rs. 50 crore for development of identified major tourist circuits and that of Rs. 5.00 crore has been enhanced to Rs. 25.00 crore for development of identified major tourist destinations to ensure the overaH development of tourism infrastructure to world standard in consultation with the concerned State/UT Government. This revision is only for major circuits and destinations while the other circuits and destinations are still eligible for assistance limited to Rs. 8 crore and Rs. 5 crore respectively.

Promotion of Tourism in Sikkim

693. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to formulate any special scheme to promote tourism in the country particularly in Sikkim;